Ghulam Muhammad Khan Bhurgri's Speech

Welcome Address In the Special Conference, Hyderabad.

This speech was delivered by Bhurgri at Hyderabad on occasion of Sindh Special Conference in the capacity of Chairman Reception Committee.

"Brother Delegates and respected participants I welcome you on behalf of reception committee and am thankful to all, as you have taken pains to attend this conference. I understand that the arrangement for your stay has not been perfect as should have been done. I therefore apologize for this lapse. I request you to ignore, this difficulty keeping in view the sentiments in our hearts.

Respected delegates you are aware that this conference has been convened to consider an important subject. Before deliberating the subject, it is our duty to assure the British Government that we are their supporters, particularly in this position of war in which England has incurred huge expenditure more than her revenue earnings for three years. The English have not taken part in the war to earn something but they are desirous to restore justice in the state and save smaller nations from the aggression of big and oppressive countries. The war sentiment has not receded till today. The India has played its role nicely and scarified for the Government. She has not only performed her duty but to render unconditional love and faith in favor of the Government. It is still not known as to when the victory would be achieved and war would be over. Till the victory of justice, independence and objective of the Government are not achieved; it is our duty and right to help England. We should always pray for the victory of allied powers.

Dear participants now I come to the agenda of this meeting. You are aware that our purpose of gathering here is to consider the measures to develop our province. It could be evident from the study of India's common public affairs. You know that after war is over, the reconstitution of the Government is to be considered. In that proposal India wants to have her share. For that right India's two major parties, the Indian National Congress, and All India Muslim League have examined the subject threadbare. This right addresses to two main issues, one that the government should publish at charter indicating the parameters of future government, the other part deals with the reforms to be introduced after the war and our demands. These are evident. They demanded through a resolution that:

a) It is a fact that India's major communities are the custodians of the country since ancient times possessing capabilities to govern and administer the public affairs. If the development in education and provision of service to the nation by the English government during last 100 years is considered, it would be evident that the system has not been successful to fulfill the common needs and demand of the people. Therefore the Congress is of the opinion that His Majesty should publish a charter

declaring that the English desire to accede to the demand for establishment of the self-government in the India very soon.

b) Congress demands that the self-government should be established completely taking full and final action. For this, the reforms recommend by the Congress Muslim League Committee should be implemented in letter and spirit.

c) In the reconstitution, India should be elevated from the status of sub-ordination to that of equal level of governance in other parts of the government.

I do not want to go into further details on these reforms. Every Indian owns these proposals and there is no need to further explain the matter. I further emphasize that this is a preliminary demand being the first episode of the reforms and is the minimum of what is actually required. We are not ready to accept less than what has been outlined in the resolution. The implementation of complete reforms will not satisfy us forever but it would be only help for the present for the reason that these reforms are part and first step of our rights. We have full right of independence within the country as is provided to other settlements. That independence means," Self-government should participate fully with other partners in the government at equal level under the British crown." That is our objective. When we demand Home Rule or the self-government, it does not mean not to accept British supremacy or we want cessation from the British Empire. This is contrary to the demand and desire of Indian people. This thought is baseless and aware people of India as well as England understand this issue very well. For example Mr. Frances Young Husband, recently in a meeting said," The Indian political leaders, based on the will of millions of people, do not have the desire to break the connection with the England; however they desire to have independence within the government and not outside. Dear Sir, now let us consider the reason for demanding self-government. The main reason is that we understand that it will accrue countless benefits. Swaraj will also benefit the government fostering our relations with each other, not breaking at any times, having permanent feature. It will promote love and respect among each other. Government will run with the desire of people promoting public affairs and business smoothly. The officers will serve under control of the people who are now at the top of the ruling stage. They will have to step down and kept at the appropriate positions under the control of people and answerable to the public.

The self-government will provide us the institutions having real representation of the public, directly accountable to the people. We shall defend ourselves with the help of Suraj and formation of defense force for national protection. For that purpose, Weapons will be provided to the people. Self-government will also help in revenue collection and control over state expenditure with justified and co-operative farming system. The expertise and trade will expand in India; the education will be made common, judiciary and executive be separated. For implementation of these reforms, there is a consensus based on demand of the people since many years. These reforms will benefit the people largely as this is the only treatment of the disease. The reforms will also remove the defects that have made the government's face ugly. I understand that some dangerous misunderstandings have developed in the bureaucracy and their followers. These misunderstandings have badly affected the Home Rule movement. If we probe the matter a little bit, it would be apparent that the objections commonly raised are unfounded and only posed to detriment the greatest and holy movement.

The first objection has been based on the hypothesis that home rule is not the compulsory right and the demand if abrupt and unattractive. These are dangerous hostilities. This objection is based on either honesty or dishonesty. If it is based on dishonesty, its considering is a big mistake. In case, it has been honestly raised, then the knowledge of the movers regarding history of national movements is questionable. They are in fact not conscious of the situation resulting in the negative assessment. For the honest critics, I shall only say a sentence based on truth that can be repeated repeatedly. That sentence truly is that, "The right of self-government is based on the principle of natural justice since birth of every human being." This right, based on the justice and liberalism is the pride of British government. A large number of British intellectuals have upheld this right. This right has been protected by the British government itself and acted upon in letter and spirit. People are grateful for that act but only say that implementation is very slow. This right is being demanded by the National Congress and Muslim League from time to time.

Second objection has been ascribed that, 'the demand for home rule is beyond the limit'. Why? This is the right of independence then, is it awful to demand in dependence? Liberal and experienced people demand not less than that. Do the people of England demand for themselves less than independence? Whether colonies demand less than that? Is it not the fact that independence is the national life of England? Is it not a fact that the foundation of then nationalism is independence? What is other status and pride of England? They claim colossal love with the independence. The history of England is no other continuous effort and struggle for the independence with the prime objective of uprooting the oppression and cruelty. First, tell me about the object of this war that has squeezed foremost goal to protect the sacred land of independence from tarnishing. If this is not the war of principles then what is it? Has the India not supported England to win the war of principles? Shall the India say that the principles for which they have given blood and accepted the death are not meant for the Indians? This reply is not given by the common British nation to the Indians for which they have been continuously struggling to attain Swaraj and is supporting India on that count. India is grateful to them. The British government at its own has been assuring the Indians that their pledge i:: sacred and their prime objective is to lead and help India to achieve Swaraj.

Third objection regarding home rule is that proper time for this demand has yet to come and the demand is premature. If self-government is opposed, no objective will be achieved. Therefore, this new strategy has been adopted pleading that the time has not come for the demand, and as such, it is not our right. In the past they did not agree to even concede a little right to us. Now, they say that, we have the right but this right is premature. Is it so? Have we not been capable of self-rule? We, who are the custodians of the most ancient civilization, we are the successors of those who were famous for their knowledge and wisdom in the times when west was living in the jungle. They had proved their capabilities to rule and undertake business as and when they opted to do so. This capability was not only exposed prior to the British rule, but even now, it is evident from the local states. We are the nation from where such people emerged who could be compared with the intellectuals of any country. We are the people who created Panchayats in the ancient times sowing the seeds of self-government. In addition,, that Panchayat system has been continuing perfectly despite various upheavals. We are those who elected the king and that system is continuing. See the Islamic system. What is the Islamic system? We can say that Islamic system is the essence of government by the people. In the past Caliph was appointed after his election by the people. We are not

capable of self-rule but the citizens of Philippines and Gua are capable. If we are not capable then how could we attain capability? Who will fix the time for attaining capability? Whether those people will decide who want to deny this legitimate right. We are being kept away from the right of making us capable in your eyes, and then tell us how could we achieve the goal? Once Lord McCauley said, "it was wise not to permit the people self-government until the people themselves prove that they were capable of running such government." This principle is of the wisdom and compared with the finding that until a person is not capable of swimming, he should not be allowed to enter the water. Similarly, they say that prove your capability without giving us the opportunity, is uncalled for. Similarly, they want to ensure that no such opportunity should be given to us on that account. The other objection is that common people, being illiterate cannot protect themselves. They have different views and therefore, they cannot consult each other and undertake other works. Who is responsible for illiteracy? Who is responsible for their helplessness and idleness? Who opposed and failed the Free and Compulsory education bill? Who had introduced the Arms Act? How is this possible that you are the reason of our weaknesses as well as against us? All these shortcomings are the basic reason for demanding home rule for India. These should not be reasons to oppose and negate the home rule by the bureaucracy. If there are many opponents of home rule, even then, we have already proved our capability to run the self-government. One of the proofs is the demand of home rule itself made by us. Mr. Bahamas, famous writer in his book, entitled," Democracy and Reaction", published ii 1905, has stated that the East has yet to prove its ability to go for self-rule as per people's demand. But in this connection national intellectuals and statesmen should be unanimous that their demand is based on facts and that its capability has not been declared. In that case, their primary demand is appropriate example. For capability, it is vital that people are themselves eager to demand the self-rule having strong desire and capability of self-recognition. They must react to the foreign rule. It should be remembered that if these conditions prevail the independence could flourish. The experts of human psychology state that in case governing system having towering principles are imposed upon the backward nations, the results could be damaging. The development in such conditions should be gradual. The argument is fair. But this principle cannot be applied when people become highly aware to introduce such a system with highly valuable principles. It is the duty of the capable intellectuals to develop such concepts ever, on the cost of the numerous difficulties in their government.

These demands have been placed before the Indian government. The government of India is not confronting with the principles that are in the air. We do not ask for the application of the principles that are in practice in England, but we have to get the benefits as endorsed by the Indian people by application in the reality. Our intellectuals are considering such principles and in that connection, they are to be tested as how do they stand on the stage of the independence.

One of the objections against the Home Rule is that a few selfish educated people are demanding this. This is not the fact as the prime object of the representative and responsible government is that the public should have control that can only be exercised through their representatives and not directly. It should be remembered that the people would elect these representative, most probably from the educated lot. It is not correct to say that educated representatives are not the representatives of the people. This theory negates the principle of representative government. This is strange to say that the nation has no citizens and their family members. They have been born and brought up

indigenously with their people; they know their country having natural rights with their people. They can understand their thoughts, sentiments, demands, desires and hopes very well. This kind of concept is natural without any artificial element. The educated are in the support of their people with truthful, proof. The educated are working hard to help the common people. Who demanded compulsory education system in the Council for benefit of the common people? Who supported the Credit Cooperative Movement that benefited the public? When the agonies in South Africa triggered, who raised the voice? It should be left to the common people to decide as to who are their representatives and well-wishers. Has it ever happened that common people have declined to accept educated people as their representatives? The strange and stranger group of people and officers who have no right to be the representatives of common people has started this movement. These officers are alien to the birth, history, customs, traditions, heart and brains of Indians. They have no natural relation, having a little local experience and are not aware of Indian life, association, languages, systems, customs, habits, inner desires, relations, objects and hopes and for them they have misunderstandings. Evidently, these baseless and bogus thoughts should always be ignored but deliberated only for the reason that the educated have been unnecessarily blamed. This weapon given to the officers has blocked the hopes of the common people. It is a barrier between the people and the government. How has this happened? The government claims that it is the representative government of die people. If it is so, the government and peoples thinking should be the same. What is in the benefit of people should also be beneficial to the government and if anything is detrimental to the public, it should be damaging to the government. Who is responsible for the current situation, which is deteriorating day by day? Why should the people start movement, be it the Home Rule or even against the government or common evils such as, Rasai, Chher or repressive laws or bail for good conduct from the people or even for the non-damaging meeting of zamindars leading to the annoyance of the officers. It is most important that this gulf is increasing day by day, being detrimental to the Government as well as public. It has also resulted in the reduced interaction of the officers with the people. Nature and history both state that heart and soul of the people cannot be captured with any force and all efforts in that relation have failed rather damaged the objective. Where such repressive acts have been applied against the independent thoughts, it has posed problems. If the people take no action, it culminates into some disease that is immunized resulting in dishonesty toeing the line of bureaucracy. The people, who are habitual of getting benefit from Government, bow down their heads before the officers creating a section of people who always praise the Government for their benefits. These people do not care for their respect and do not reveal the facts and are selfish in their acts and do not care for the rights of their brothers and damage the relations and rights of the people. This section of society is neither representative of people nor is responsible to anyone. These people have no character and they are damaging the nation. They are the bad organs having cancer liable to cut and remove to protect the body from fatal disease. This movement against home rule has been created either by the officers or by their followers who fully participate to gain favors from them. In my opinion, either officers are unaware of the facts or they deliberately keep themselves away from the prevailing conditions in the society. This is not a wise act. It is very damaging to close the eyes not recognizing the facts. If the facts are not accepted and restored, then there would be no success. There is no power to defeat the truth. King Chanute when proved before the people that the velocity of the ocean cannot be stopped, in fact he wanted to prove this law. The officers either cannot see this reality or they do not intend to accept the facts. It is fact that India has attained the national identity and the officers would be wise if they

accept this statement. As state 1 above, Mr. Habhaos says that "when we accept that new sprit has been created in the East, it does not mean that everywhere there would be success." It may lead to the Russian reforms implemented in Turkey. May be Indian officers dominate liberal English statesmen and King of Iran may control with the help of Kosakan or without their help. Once, when the people are awakened then the old traditions cannot prevail as these are bound to disappear. It is ridiculous to think that the East has made a start now. It should be kept in the mind that till today all the religions have been given to the World by the East. The East has given half of the Philosophy. East has never been aggressive to conquer and dominate other nations, but East has always advocated the spiritual liberalism and taught many lessons to the West. In turn, the East has learnt a lesson that the objective of the life is not to be compromised and defeated under any circumstances. They have learnt from Japan that practical science is not the sole authority of the Europeans. They have also learnt that they can raise and manage the Navy and Army in the East.

The last objection is "against the authority of the Government that at this delicate point of time raising this question is the wastage of time creating confusion in the governance. They argue that this demand does not suit now for the reason that Government is busy in the World War. Therefore, such demands should not be raised now. These people have not understood the movement in connection with the Government. Real and regular home ruler has not demanded that Government should immediately introduce home rule in India. Nevertheless, the demand is that after the war is over and the work of restructuring of government is taken up, then India should be given the legitimate right of self-rule. It is advisable to make all the preparations in advance and proposals finalized to act upon without further loss of time. You must understand that the aware people have never raised these objections. This statement is substantiated by the fact that some other English colonies are demanding right of self-rule with the help and assistance of the Minister, Mr. Bonarala. Besides, these objections have also lost importance as the British Government has itself taken some steps during the war to introduce reforms in the Government of India. In the House of Commons, the government has recently declared principles of reforms in the India, as such the restlessness and agitation in India has been normalized for the time being.

Now let us consider the desirable reforms in the country. It must be remembered that the reforms demanded by us are the first step toward retaliation of self-government. At the initial stage, we demand that in the governance, common people should have the sufficient authority. For that purpose, it is essential to have system whereby the government should be responsible to the people. We do not demand the minor changes in the system, but ask for complete reforms leading to the implementation that creates a system having full and real control of the common people and the elected representatives. We have no differences with a particular group of the people, but we are against the current governing system. The bureaucracy should be abolished and in its place government responsible to the people be constituted. People now demand major overhauling and real changes in the system as the minor and superficial changes would not meet the requirements. The basic changes in the system are the real answer to all the troubles and in case no change is made in the officers, there is no need to be bothered. This is wrong understanding of the people that we demand to replace the British with the

Indians to run the government. This is not the object of any body and this hope is baseless. However, if the present system of the government is continued, there is no hope of improvement. But if the reforms are implemented as per our scheme, then there would be no protest and gap if the reign of the government is with the British. Gentlemen the question regarding future government of India is so fragile and important that this is responsibility of the people as well as the government to properly resolve it. The government has understood this, important question by releasing three nationalist leaders, Mrs Annie Besant, Mr. Arandale and Wadia resulting in peace and contentment in the country. For this act of wisdom, whole India is grateful to the government. We may have different feelings for their arrest, but on their release, we congratulate the government and we, with all the Indians request the government to release all the prisoners from jails particularly two brothers M/S Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali whose arrest has put the whole Muslim community under the state of anguish. This demand is substantiated all the way through the numerous resolutions passed in the meetings for their release. Therefore, it is hoped enormously that government at this sensitive time would order immediately to release both the brothers to meet the demand all over the country. Despite the demand of majority, we are receiving negative signals as recent speech of Lord Pentland and the incident attached to Sir Michael Dyer have broken our hearts. Even then we Indians have firm belief in the statesmanship, justice and fairness of the English that cannot be misled at any stage. Based on this trust the British government has recently considered allowing Indians more freedom in the national affairs. For that, the people of India are extremely grateful to the British government and the Secretary of State for India. It is a big and cheerful juncture for us that Honorable Mr. Montague, Secretary of State for India, renowned statesman, champion of justice, and promoter of liberal international principles, is himself coming to consider the proposal formulated for the reforms. This gentleman has been assigned this intricate and important assignment, on which the future development of millions of Indians depends. We understand the he will come across many difficulties and hurdles particularly by the people who had been taking illegitimate favors. Therefore, it is the duty of Indian citizens to make maximum efforts and create an atmosphere enabling the Secretary of State for India to solve this complicated problem. Mr. Montague is certainly capable of solving the problem as his speeches regarding public affairs of India show that his thoughts and principles are most liberal and based on the justice. At the occasion of report on the Mesopotamia, he used the following words in the House of Commons, giving us the hope and strength that this gentleman will certainly do justice and not hesitate to decide the matter judiciously.

Mr. Montague says that, "When I see around that the colonies under our control and the states in India are enjoying self-government and I clearly see that whole English Empire is not a government, but its separate parts are self-governments and at the top the British government is formed. What kind of government you foresee in India? It is your choice but it is apparent that all the Indians with whom I have communication or to whom I have addressed, desire to know about the ultimate future and form of Government in India. Therefore it is required that as to how you are going to adopt the reforms as a first step. From the reforms it will be seen whether the Indian representatives are given the control over the executive officers or not. If you give power to the local people then the supervision from England will be reduced. I am fully confident that earlier the system of government enforced there was satisfactory, but the report of Mesopotamia clearly indicates that it was not so as the people had no role in the governance. This war has given you to understand that Indians are loyal and supporting us in the odd times. This

loyalty is in fact part of their religion. It is now essentially required that you should get real benefits of their loyalty and if you desire to own them, provide them opportunity of self-rule. In that case, even if there is some other war, these loyal Indians will certainly help you standing by your side on equal basis. If you do not change the old and out dated system of government quickly, certainly you will be losing the right of governance over India."

After above statements dealing with the Indian government, now I come to the main object of convening this conference. Dear brothers, the objective is to consider the matter relating to share of Sindh in the reforms collectively. The state of government in Sindh is quite different from very beginning, hence different and special treatment is required to change the system. In our case, the governance is different from other parts. Here we are being governed by one autocratic office with no provision of council to advice on the public affairs. This kind of system of government is not functioning in any of the provinces in India. Not only this but even in Bombay no such system is enforced in any part. It is one man rule that too opposed to the liberal opinion. This system seems strange and terrible. It is the legacy of the past, which will not be liked in the moderate and advanced times. Rarely will we find a person supporting this outmoded system. For this kind of government, special reasons and arguments are required, which might have been made under the extreme compelling reasons. But here no such reason is seen and compelling circumstances are being encountered by the government to form such a government. If such requirement was m the past it is not wise to continue such a system under any circumstances. The problem is inbuilt in the system of the government; therefore, it is not required to change the attitude of a particular officer. The future economic and social development of Sindh entirely depends on the formation of such government. The development of Legislative and Executive Council shall not in any case benefit the people of Sindh till the present system of the government continues as such any change in the system of the Councils will not benefit us. It is therefore evident that we have to work hard in comparison to other parts of India and particularly for our own province. The demand to be made is to be decided by you and for that purpose, we have gathered in this conference. Everyone from you will definitely demand that we do not need "one man rule." This is our unanimous and forceful demand. I understand that we should follow one of the following four alternatives:

(1) First alternative is this that Sindh should be made a separate province having Legislative Council, without forming Executive Council for the reason that expenditure of Executive Council cannot be afforded by this province and without Executive Council, the Legislative Council will be of no use. The legislative Council is meant for exercising control over the Executive Council and if the Executive Council is not in existence, the question of forming Legislative Council does not arise. Therefore, I am of the opinion that this proposal is not feasible.

(2) The second alternative is to merge Sindh and Baluchistan and both the Governors should be under Darajlas. I dislike this proposal, as we will be merged with an alien country whose development status is at primitive stage. Therefore, our development will be hindered and we will remain backward.

(3) The third alternative is to merge Sindh and Punjab and then both the Governors should work under one Governor Darajlas. (Committee under the Chairmanship of Governor) I know that this proposal will be criticized. Having

weaknesses, nobody can say that this proposal is better than the current state of affairs. In both the cases the Punjab and Sindh have the same river; therefore this will benefit the agriculture. This is universally known but both provinces have continuous dispute on the river water. This proposal has a benefit that it will constitute an authoritative High Court providing basis for justice.

(4) The fourth and last option is that Sindh should remain under the Bombay government participating with all other parts of Bombay. In my opinion this way is feasible. It will provide good result as no major change would be required for resolving the problem. Only the powers of Commissioner-in-Sindh should be transferred, the Bombay, having direct control of Executive Council over Sindh. Our demand is that this authoritative system of the government should be done away with and Sindh be made at par with other parts. With the demand of this right, Sindh will also get the benefit of having similar judicial system as enforced in other parts. HereSindh Sadar Court is separate from the High Court. In the Sadar Court there are only three judges, of these two are from the civil service. It is clear that this kind of High Court should not be formed. These reforms were demanded in the 11th Provincial conference at Bombay convened in 1901. A person having personal knowledge of the present judicial system moved this resolution and he was a famous and highly experienced lawyer. I am referring to Dewan Teckchand Udhadas who is Honorable member now. I propose that a bench of Bombay High Court should be established at Karachi. I understand that such system is also working in other parts. Many other reforms are required for Sindh. I have taken much time therefore; leave these issues for deliberation by the President and others. For example, reforms for Local self-Government and request to the government for release of interned Sindhis.

Government has asked to collect house tax forcibly, this and other main questions, I leave for taking up in the conference. Gentlemen, I have taken undue advantage of your patience, but the issues are very important and sensitive. In the end I have to say something. lt is my duty to appreciate educated youngsters who performed very well even in the hard trial. They have shown their courage and patience in the suppression. They are the natives with new signs of the glorious dawn. I am fully confident that the day of success will come very soon."

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